

DISCIPLES

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RELIGIOUS CONTACTS


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Abraham Lincoln and Religion

Disciples of Christ

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

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LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
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FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

February 13, 1956

LINCOLN—A COSMOPOLITAN CHRISTIAN

The beginning of the Lenten season invites a review of some of the religious bodies with which the Lincoln family came in contact. It is well known that Abraham Lincoln was not a member of any church group, yet he was a man of profound faith in God. It is the purpose of this monograph to arrange chronologically a compilation of testimonies in which various denominations have set forth their claims of having influenced Lincoln at some time in his life. A summary of these allegations might allow us to think of Lincoln as a cosmopolitan Christian.

QUAKER

Lincoln prepared a biographical sketch for John Locke Scripps in which he wrote: "The family (Lincolns) were originally Quakers, though in later times they have fallen away from the peculiar habits of that people." We have not discovered that any of Lincoln's direct ancestors were members of that body although some of the Pennsylvania Lincolns intermarried with the Quakers. When Herbert Hoover became President the Society of Friends claimed two chief executives, Lincoln and Hoover.

METHODIST

The parents of Lincoln were married by a Methodist clergyman, Jesse Head, and when Thomas Lincoln married his second wife another minister of that church, John L. Rogers, performed the ceremony. When Lincoln became President, the Foundry Methodist Church at Washington, where Lincoln was in attendance on a special occasion, by subscriptions collected at the time, made the President a Life Director of its Missionary Society. The Methodist Bishop Simpson spoke the last eulogy over the body of Lincoln at Springfield, Illinois.

BAPTIST

Lincoln's parents very early affiliated with the Little Mount Separate Baptist Church in Kentucky which was an anti-slavery organization. After the President's death his widow wrote: "My husband's heart was naturally religious, he had often described to me his noble mother—the prayers she offered up for him." During the Indiana days the father Thomas joined Pigeon Baptist Church by letter from Kentucky and his second wife joined by experience. Abraham's sister affiliated with the church about the time of her wedding and it was customary for young people to postpone church membership until establishing a home. Abraham did not marry until he was thirty-three years old.

CATHOLIC

Abraham Lincoln's first school teacher was Zachariah Riney, a member of the Catholic faith. Abe's Aunt Mary Mudd Lincoln and her son also named Abraham, the President's cousin, were also members of that church. A Eucharistic Congress was held in Chicago in 1927 and Cardinal Muehlestein according to the press, stated: "When Father St. Cyr came to say mass for Lincoln's stepmother, Mr. Lincoln (Abraham, the President) would prepare the altar himself. Indeed with his own hands Abraham carved out six wooden chairs to be used at the mass." Apparently stepmother was confused with aunt.

DISCIPLES

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lincoln after settling in Illinois affiliated with the Disciples of Christ or Christian Church and they both died members of this church. A reminiscence of Rev. John O. Kane, a well known minister of the Christian Church stated: "I baptised him (Abraham Lincoln) in a creek near Springfield, Illinois. . . . I placed his name on the church book. He lived and died a member of the Church of Christ." (Name does not appear on register.) Dr. Edward Scribner Ames, minister of the University Church of Disciples in Chi-

cago stated in a sermon: "Lincoln could very well be a member of this church. Why not take him in." The following year Dr. Ames unveiled a Lincoln bust and concluded the ceremonies with the statement, "Mr. Lincoln we receive you into the membership and fellowship of this church."

EPISCOPALIAN

An Episcopalian clergyman of Springfield, Illinois, Rev. Charles Dresser officiated at the wedding of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd. Later Lincoln purchased the rectory from Dr. Dresser and lived in that home during the Springfield years. Approaching the choir in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York there has been prepared in the parapet a series of twenty recesses each representing a century in the Christian era. The niche prepared for the nineteenth century contains a statuette of Abraham Lincoln suggesting that he had contributed most to Christian civilization during that century.

PRESBYTERIAN

Mrs. Abraham Lincoln was a member of the Presbyterian Church at Springfield, Ill. and Mr. Lincoln, although not a formal member, served in different capacities for the church. During the Washington days both Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln attended the New York Ave. Presbyterian Church and rented a pew in the church which now bears a memorial tablet. Mrs. Sydney Lauck, for seventy years a member of the church said on the information of Dr. Gurley, the minister, that Abraham Lincoln "but for the assassin who took his life would have made public profession of his faith in Christ on Easter 1865."

CONGREGATIONALIST

Dr. W. E. Barton, a leading Congregationalist minister, gave an address at Illinois College at Jacksonville, Ill. On the assumption that Ann Rutledge before her death was planning to attend the Jacksonville Female College, and also assuming that Lincoln would have followed her and attended the Illinois College, Dr. Barton ventured this conclusion: "It requires no vivid stretch of the imagination to think of Abraham Lincoln as emerging from Illinois College as a Congregational minister." Dr. Barton further observed that Lincoln's early training "would have made him familiar with the Congregational form of church government."

SPIRITUALIST

The *St. Louis Globe Democrat* on March 31, 1896 in reporting the Progressive Spiritualists Convention at Springfield, Mo. stated that a delegate claimed: "Lincoln, as is well established by history, was a firm believer in Spiritualism as any member of the association." Another delegate commented: "It would hardly be fair to designate Lincoln as a spiritualist, though he is known to have accepted in a general way the truths of our religion." In 1891 Nellie C. Maynard published a 264 page book entitled "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?"

UNITARIAN

The American Unitarian Association issued a leaflet under the caption "He Never Joined a Church" in which it is stated "I think that Lincoln could have been a Unitarian if he had been aware of the freedom of belief, the right of every man to think for himself on matters of religion."

UNIVERSALIST

Dr. Frank O. Hall of New York according to a report of a sermon stated: "We Universalists like to remember that Lincoln believed in the ideals our church stands for. He was a predestinarian, and his Calvinistic faith made him practically a Universalist."

PLANTING THE CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES AT
LITTLE MACKINAW,
1833-1927.

MACKINAW TOWNSHIP, TAZEWELL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

BY EMMA DELLE RAILSBACK DARST.

We of the fifth and sixth generations have lived so long in the enjoyment of present-day blessings, that it is difficult for us to enter into the trials and hardships of these forebears of ours who traveled long trails to find for themselves new homes and new fields for their cultivation. Emerson Hough in his book, "The Covered Wagon," has immortalized the trials and triumphs of the frontier days and the dauntless pioneer men and women. Most of them carried across the trackless wilderness ideals of home and beauty and love of God that soon blossomed into fruitage.

In fancy let us visualize those forebears of ours in their far-off comfortable homes of ease and culture, in Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina. The momentous question of uprooting their families to travel to the far-distant wilderness was debated again and again with trembling hearts at the thought of leaving behind the friends they loved and the comforts to which they were accustomed; but the urge was there which finally compelled them to go. For some the enjoyment of perfect liberty of conscience was the great object they sought in making a home for themselves in the western world.

We can see the anxious examination of the animals that the best to endure the long journey be selected; the covering of the wagons to shelter the women and children from storm and heat; the trembling lips of the mothers as treasures dear to their hearts were laid aside to be left behind.

The brave eyes never faltering, though tears coursed down their cheeks, lips whispering the good-byes to friends

and loved ones, perhaps never to be seen again; the last wave of the hand to home and dear ones; their courage, their indomitable spirit, the exalted expressions of religious faith on their faces as they turned them to the new life in the unbroken wilderness.

In 1830, Thomas Fisher Railsback and his wife, Louisa Villers Railsback, came from Montgomery County, Kentucky, to Illinois with their four children, entering land from the government in Little Mackinaw Township in Tazewell County. By the labor of their hands they developed this land into a farm home where they lived continuously (except for a short residence in Tremont) until 1868. For ninety-seven years this beautiful grove in which we hold our annual reunions, has been possessed by a Railsback—passing from Thomas Fisher Railsback in direct line to the present owner, Fay D. Railsback, of the fourth generation of the family in Illinois.

The first Christian Church north of the Sangamon river was organized in 1828 at Hittle's Grove, in Tazewell County.

Although a Baptist, Thomas Fisher Railsback placed his letter with this congregation until a consecrated little group of seven neighbors of like ideals, as our old records show, "called a meeting of the following disciples at Brother Railsback's house on Saturday preceding the fourth Lord's day in May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three, for the purpose of organizing in a church capacity. Elders John Oatman and William Miller of Walnut Grove, now Eureka, being present with the brethren and sisters agreed to take the scriptures of Divine Truth as their only rule of faith and practice. The following were the named "Charter Members": Thomas F. Railsback, Louisa V. Railsback, Martin and Ann Judy, Elijah and Mariah Howell, and Alexander B. Davis."

This little group continued to hold communion and prayer service in their humble homes, waiting for months the time when a minister would come their way. The first public house in which this congregation worshipped was what was known as the "old frame school house," about half a mile south of

the T. F. Railsback home, now marked by a marble slab in the Little Mackinaw cemetery.

The slavery question at this time was stirring the minds and consciences of thoughtful men and for that reason Mr. John Q. Adams, Mr. Ben Major and Mr. Ben Radford, with their families, left their homes in Kentucky to move into a free country and to Illinois they came, finding in Tazewell County their friends and the newly established church home. Mr. Adams settled on a farm adjoining that of Mr. Railsback, but Mr. Major and Mr. Radford went on to Walnut Grove where a church had been established in 1832. While a house was being erected for Mr. Adams, his family stayed at the home of Mr. James S. B. Allensworth. The following year Mr. William Samuel of Shelby County, Kentucky, settled on a farm adjoining Mr. Adams on the west and Mr. Davis and Mr. Howell on farms near by.

Very seldom the congregation had the privilege of having a preacher, but Grandfather Railsback led the social service and Grandfather Adams led the singing.

The business organization of this church was completed in 1834 by the selection of Brethren T. F. Railsback and John Q. Adams as Elders and Brethren William Samuel and Alexander Davis as Deacons and A. Davis as Clerk.

Elder James Lindsey, who came to this neighborhood in 1834, was the first minister of this congregation. There were difficulties to overcome and problems to be met in this newly organized Church, and as they had agreed to take the Scriptures of Divine Truth as their only rule of faith and practice, when they found brethren or sisters "in fault," they disciplined them according to their knowledge and understanding of New Testament teaching. The records of this first church show a number of the members were dismissed for "intoxication" and "improper conduct." The records also show that Bro. Thomas F. Railsback resigned his Eldership the first Lord's Day in December, 1843, and was restored to the Eldership the third Lord's Day in December in 1843. Resigned again the third Lord's Day in March, 1844. William Samuel withdrew by consent the fourth Lord's Day in Decem-

ber, 1843, and returned to the Church in full fellowship the third Lord's Day in May, 1845. Thomas F. Railsback and Alexander Davis were chosen to act as Elders the second Lord's Day in April, 1846. Alexander B. Davis disowned by the congregation the first Lord's Day in November, 1850, was restored in full fellowship on Saturday, August 2nd, 1851. Being an adjourned meeting from July, 1851, the following proceedings which are annexed: "To the Elders and Brethren of the Church of Christ at Little Mackinaw met for the purpose of adjusting the difficulties existing between Bro. A. B. Davis and Bro. T. F. Railsback. Present Bro. William Davenport from the Walnut Grove Church, and after deliberation Bro. Davis makes the following acknowledgment, 'that he is now satisfied that he injured the committee and the brethren of Little Mackinaw in saying they had acted unrighteously in their decision.' Bro. Davis further states, 'He is now sorry he revived an old difficulty of fourteen years standing. That it is wrong and from the statement of Bro. Railsback he is satisfied and ever has been that it is both wicked and wrong to fail to fulfill contracts, or enter public lands when claimed by another.'" Bro. Davis sincerely regrets that he should have been the occasion of any unpleasant feelings and desires the brethren of this Church to forgive him. In relation to the statement made by Bro. Railsback, "That a designing man (himself or any other) might cause 'schisms' in churches by a popular vote, is indeed true, and that Bro. Railsback only made use of himself as an opposite illustration, and further, that if Bro. Railsback ever made a promise to Bro. Davis he has forgotten it, and if he ever agreed to let him have any land he is sorry he did not fulfill the promise.

Respecting certain letters written to Bro. Railsback bearing dates February 18th, and March 11th, 1851, Bro. Davis says he is sorry he ever wrote them; that the language of said letters is harsh and discourteous, and such as one brother should not use toward another.

Adjourned to meet August 2nd, 1851. Met pursuant to adjournment, when the following proposition was made by

Elder Minier: "Will we brethren endeavor to forget and cordially forgive the past and live for God and Christ and one another?" Whereupon all present responded in the affirmative. Signed: G. W. Minier, Moderator.

The ministers who located in this neighborhood in the pioneer days were Elder James Lindsay, 1834; Elder Isaac Stout, 1843; Dr. G. W. Minier, 1850; Bro. Jeremiah (Uncle Jerry) Chaplin, 1856; Bro. James G. (Uncle Jimmie) Mitchell, 1857. Out of this consecrated little group grew a strong church and from it went forth workers to various parts of the world, even to the Isles of the Sea. In the same building where services were held the children went to school. Two teachers of this first school whose lives have meant so much to the community, to the church and to the whole round world, deserve mention, Dr. George W. Minier and Caroline Nevelle.

Mr. Minier was a broadly educated man and the children of that pioneer day were given a strong foundation for an education under his able teaching. To the influence of Mr. John Q. Adams he always attributed his conversion from Atheism. He became a minister of the Christian Church and like the Apostles of old he preached without financial recompense, except what his congregation gave him as a free will offering.

Caroline Nevelle as a young girl taught school in this building and boarded at Grandfather Railsback's. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Nevelle, had membership in this church in 1837. They afterward moved to Eureka where Caroline was graduated from Eureka College in 1867 and married a minister by the name of Pearre and went to Iowa City, Iowa, to live. It was here that the conviction came to her that a Woman's Missionary Society should be formed. The little spark that glowed in the heart of Caroline Nevelle Pearre kindled and spread till its light shines into the dark places of the earth, and the Isles of the sea have heard thereof and are glad.

In the late forties the little community had grown and spread until it became necessary to build another house. Grandfather Railsback donated an acre of ground three-

quarters of a mile north of his farm home, where in 1849 was built what was known as the "old brown school house" at Four Corners. This house was built by public subscription and cost between six and seven hundred dollars. It also continued to be the meeting place for church and school until in 1863, Thomas Adams donated a plot of land on the township road where the first church home for the Little Mackinaw congregation was built.

The records of the church show that they met to worship in the new home for the first time January 4th, 1867. Officers were chosen. Elders, D. G. A. Railsback, J. B. Chaplin, J. S. Briggs, A. Williams and R. J. Mitchell. Deacons, Charles Samuel, C. W. Hinman, N. P. Williams, T. M. Adams and J. E. Railsback. The statistical report of the Church of Christ in Illinois for the year ending May 30th, 1890: "Local church, name Little Mackinaw, postoffice Bradley, Tazewell County, Illinois. House of worship was erected in 1866 at a cost of one thousand dollars. No church parsonage or other property. No church debt. Fifty-six members in good standing. Increase by baptism, 5; by letter, 2; total, 7. Annual decrease by letter, 4; by death, 1; total net gain, 2." The records show that at a meeting of the Official Board of the Church, January 7th, 1867, it was agreed that the officers of the congregation visit delinquent members, whereupon D. G. A. Railsback and R. J. Mitchell were appointed to visit Bros. A. S. Davis, charge of fighting, and Charles Campbell, charge drunkenness, and Sister Jane Davis, charge dancing, and J. B. Chaplin to visit Mary Kester, charge dancing, and Bros. B. T. Railsback and Oliver McComis, charge using profane language. Officers report January 11th, 1867. Bros. Davis, Railsback, Campbell and McComis, favorably and honorably settled. Did not see Sister Jane Davis, unsettled. Sister Mary Kester's case laid over for further action, unsettled.

To use Bro. Minier's own words, "The Little Mackinaw Church swarmed three times." The first swarm, as the old record of the Little Mackinaw Church shows that in October, 1837, twenty-three members of the congregation were dis-

missed by joint letter, and the record of the Mackinaw Church shows that on the 5th day of October under the able leadership of Elder James Lindsey, they formed the organization of the Mackinaw Township Church at what is known as Mount Pleasant School house (at that time a log house) in Elder Lindsey's neighborhood. They chose as Elders, George Hittle and Samuel Flesher, and Deacons, Michael Hittle and Nehemiah Hill. James Lindsey as Evangelist was authorized to administer the ordinance of the church, also to solemnize the rites of matrimony. A resolution was then made "and we agreed to meet the first day of every week to worship if not providentially prevented." The school house and private homes were soon too small to accommodate the anxious congregation. In 1849 a majority of the members favored building a church in Mackinaw Town. On the 9th day of April, 1850, the contract was let for a building to be 36x50 feet. The sum to be paid for it was \$597.00. (The original bill for this church is in the possession of a member of the Mackinaw Church.) This was the first church home built in Tazewell County. The congregation continued to worship here until in 1875. They disposed of this house and erected a modern church home at a cost of \$3,300, where they have a good, strong organization, one of the two remaining churches of the original church organized in 1833.

The second "swarm" occurred when the Little Mackinaw congregation moved from Four Corners to their new church home on the Township road in 1867. This move added greatly to the distance of the members who lived in the west part of the township. At that time a Sunday School was organized at the old school house at "Black Jack." And here begins the history of the Concord Church. The State Missionary Society sent Brother George Campbell, or Father Campbell as he was known, of Eureka in January, 1870. The record of the Little Mackinaw Church shows that letters were issued February 6th, 1870, to forty members of their congregation as charter members of this new organization at Concord. The officers chosen were Elders, Thomas Russell and Samuel Probasco, and Deacons, James G. Smith and F. O. Kilby. About

this time the little congregation at Tennessee Point disbanded. Bro. Isaac Stout and others from that little band united with this congregation. Uncle Isaac Stout, as he was known, was at once made Elder. He urged the building of a church house and started a subscription list to raise the money. He was ably assisted by J. V. Beekman. Times were hard and it took faith and courage of these men to induce men who were paying ten and twenty per cent interest on their debts to subscribe fifty, one hundred and one hundred fifty dollars to build a church, but it was done. Then the list amounting to twelve hundred dollars was given to Uncle Isaac Stout, he agreeing to collect the money and build the church. The heavy timbers and walnut seating were from the sawmill of Uncle Samuel Probasco. Most of the lumber was hauled from Peoria. An acre and a half of the land where the church stands was donated by Uncle Samuel Nutty. The building committee were Thomas Russell, F. O. Kilby and Thomas A. Shaw. Father Campbell named the church "Concord," and prayed that it might never become Discord. Some of the men who preached here in the early days were James Robinson, James G. Mitchell, Uncle Baily Chaplin, Caleb Hainlin, Eli Fisher, G. W. Minier, Isaac Stout and J. V. Beekman. Of the forty persons who formed the roll of charter membership, there remains but four on this side of the river, Mrs. Endora O. Martin, Mrs. Emily (Probasco) Trimble, Mrs. Eunice (Probasco) Hodgson and Mr. Thomas A. Shaw, all of whom reside in Mackinaw Town. After fifty-two years of faithful consecrated service for the Master, this church disbanded in 1924.

The third and last "swarm" from the Little Mackinaw Church settled in Minier, Tazewell County, Illinois. The record of the Minier Church book shows that on Lord's Day, Oct. 24, 1874, "We, disciples of Christ, residing in and adjacent to the town of Minier in the county of Tazewell and state of Illinois, that we may make a united and earnest effort for the salvation of sinners, and that we may observe properly and faithfully the ordinances enjoined by the Great Head of the Church, do band ourselves together in an organization

to be known as the Church of Christ in Minier, Illinois, and we hereby covenant with each other and jointly with our God that in our organization we will know no one as Master but Jesus, no bond of Union but Love and accept nothing as authoritative in all matters of Faith and Practice but the Word of God, as contained in the Old and New Testament." Seventeen formed the roll of charter membership, Louisa Villers Railsback, Sophia Mitchell, Mary E. Elliff, Elizabeth Johnson, Betsy Johnson, Rodney J. Mitchell, Mary E. Mitchell, James E. Railsback, Ann P. Railsback, N. P. Williams, Catharine (Quigg) Williams, Jennie (Minier) Edminston, T. L. Minier, John F. Quigg, Carrie Baker, Lou A. Ireland and Lon McDowell, all former members of the Little Mackinaw Church. The first official board of this church were Elders, J. B. Chaplin and Rodney J. Mitchell; Deacons, B. N. Ewing, J. W. Chidister, and T. L. Minier; and Clerk John F. Quigg. Samuel Lowe was the first minister who served the congregation as pastor. May 26th, 1875, Bro. George Adams was engaged to preach one-half time for one year at a salary of six hundred dollars. He was retained another year, full time, at a salary of twelve hundred dollars. At that time the records show a membership of two hundred five members. Other ministers who supplied the leadership were Bros. H. D. Niles, J. C. McReynolds, C. G. Cantrall, J. W. Knight, J. C. Lappin, J. E. Couch, Milo Nethercutt, R. D. Cotton and others.

The history of these pioneer families who organized this church in 1833 is an exception in that they all lived in one locality in such large numbers for so long a time, the sons and daughters settled near the old home, and the grandchildren remained in the neighborhood until middle age before they began to move away.

John Strother Briggs married Amanda Railsback, November 14th, 1839. This was the first link connecting the Railsback and Briggs families. Philip G. H. Railsback married Susan M. Adams, February 15th, 1842. This was the first link connecting the Adams and Railsback families. These three pioneer families continue to work together in the Church

of their fathers. The largest group of the descendants of Thomas F. Railsback and John Q. Adams living in the same community, is at Langdon, Kansas, where in 1889, just fifty-six years after the organization of Little Mackinaw Church at his Grandfather Railsback's home in Illinois, John Fisher (Cousin Jack) Railsback and his wife, Carrie Beckner Railsback, with eight others, organized the Langdon Christian Church in their home.

Edna P. Dale, great grand-daughter of John Q. Adams and daughter of Leona Boggs Dale, graduated from Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, in 1900. She sailed for China as a missionary under the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, November, 1901; was stationed at Wuhu in evangelistic work for women and children until the fall of 1918 with the exception of one year, 1914-1915, when she supplied as principal of the Christian Girls' School in Nanking during the furlough of another missionary. In the fall of 1918 she went to Nanking as representative of the Christian Mission on the faculty of the Bible Teachers Training School for Women, where she was a Bible teacher and in charge of the Practice Service Department. The Bible Teachers Training School for Women is the only Bible school in all China for educated young women. It is a Union School, supported by seven Mission Boards. Students come from all over China and from many missions. During the year 1922-1923, the enrollment was one hundred, representing twenty-four different missions and fifteen of the eighteen provinces of China. The young women are being trained as Bible teachers and evangelists.

“Faith of our fathers! living still,
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword;
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to Thee till death!

Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free;
How sweet would be their children's fate,
If they, like them, could die for Thee!

May 21, 1928

The Secretary
Chamber of Commerce
Charleston, Ill

Dear sir:

I regret very much that the close train connections which I will have to make at Terre Haute on Tuesday of this week will not allow me time to run over to Charleston.

One of the papers last week carried the item that there has recently been introduced at Washington a bill asking for an appropriation to build the trail from Hodgenville, Kentucky to Springfield, Ill. It looks very much as if some definite steps would be taken in the near future.

I trust you was able to get the bulletins from the State Historical Society at Springfield and have already started to work checking up their data therein.

It is possible that I shall be in your vicinity at some later date and if so will get in touch with you.

Thanking you for your courtesies during my visit there and hoping that you will be successful in the road project, I am

Sincerely yours.

P.S. I should like very much to get the special edition of your paper whi gives the history of the "Lincolns in Charleston.

Charleston Chamber of Commerce

Richter Block

Telephone 5

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CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

May 24, 1928

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sir:

I received the two bulletins for the State Historical Society last week, and we are now engaged in checking up and obtaining new evidence of the Lincoln's.

We will begin in the next few days, checking over the county records, as you suggested on your visit here. Rev. Thomas Good) man, who conducted the funeral services for Thomas Lincoln, is buried in a little cemetery south of Charleston, and on the marker, states he baptized Abraham Lincoln, which we understand is a mistake.

If you think of anything else that will help us along this line, please advise me.

Yours very truly,

G. R. Ferrish

May 14, 1961

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Dear Sir:

I received the letter of May 10, 1961, regarding the matter of the Lincoln Center. I am sorry that I cannot provide you with a more definitive answer at this time.

The Lincoln Center is a complex of buildings in New York City. It is a major cultural center and is home to the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Opera, and the Lincoln Center Theater. The Center is a landmark of modern architecture and is a source of pride for the City of New York.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. I will be glad to assist you in any way I can.

Sincerely,
John F. Kennedy

June 3, 1928

Mr. G. R. Ferrish
Charleston, Illinois

My dear Mr. Ferrish:

I wish to call your attention to a recent bulletin put out by the Lincoln Centennial Association, which discusses the Lincoln Way from Hodgenville to Springfield.

A copy of this bulletin might be secured by addressing the Lincoln Centennial Association at Springfield, Illinois.

Quite a bit of interest is being aroused now in Indiana over the route which the Lincolns took and I am sure the same interest will grow in the Illinois country.

I should be pleased to learn of any developments which take place in your community in respect to the bare foot trail, or items of any other historical interest referring to Lincoln.

Sincerely yours,

LAW:VL

Director,
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation.

RECEIVED
JAN 10 1907
U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

TO THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY DURING THE
YEAR 1906.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
TO THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
FOR THE YEAR 1906.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1907

SHERMAN DAY WAKEFIELD
144 EAST 24TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

August 16, 1940.

Dr. Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Dr. Warren:

I am particularly interested in two of the July issues of Lincoln Lore. Among your balconies, I am sorry you omitted the Pike House of Bloomington, Ill., where Lincoln and other prominent people spoke the night before the Bloomington Convention of May 29, 1856. Lincoln doubtless spoke from there on many other occasions as well.

I attended the service of the University Church of Disciples at Chicago in February, 1924, not 1927, when Dr. Ames made Lincoln a member of his church, and I was thoroughly disgusted with the whole proceeding. Had Lincoln wanted to join a church he would have done so, and I don't think any church is treating the memory of Lincoln fairly and honestly when it tries to make him a posthumous member. The whole idea was to advertise the particular church and link itself to the great name of Lincoln. Lincoln was not a member of a Disciples church, or of any other church, and may never have even heard of the Disciples denomination. Assuming Lincoln made the statement credited to him, which you quote, there were Unitarian churches both in Illinois and Washington which he could have joined had he wished.

Sincerely yours,

Sherman D. Wakefield.



August 20, 1940

Mr. Sherman Day Wakefield
144 E. 24th St.
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Wakefield:

Thank you very much for your letter with respect to the Lincoln Lore bulletins published in July and we are glad indeed to have your comments, especially the correction of the Chicago date of 1927 to 1924.

Your conclusions are certainly correct with respect to Lincoln's affiliation with any church, but his father was a member for many years of the Disciples Church at Charleston, Illinois and died a member of that church, so Lincoln was apparently familiar with the teachings of the organization.

The brief discussion on Lincoln balconies of course was so limited that a great many places where Lincoln actually spoke were not mentioned and it would not be difficult to add at least a dozen of the famous balconies to the list.

Thanking you again for your comments, I am

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

THE
MUSEUM OF
NATURAL HISTORY

NEW YORK

THE
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NATURAL HISTORY
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An Abraham Lincoln Re.

Special Dispatch to the Globe-Democrat.

TOPEKA, KAN., February 9.—The State Historical Society has received through Hon. George R. Peck a four-page manuscript in the handwriting of Abraham Lincoln, being the original bill in chancery filed by him in the McLean County (Ill.) Circuit Court, April 16, 1851, in the case of Alexander Campbell against James Allen. The document bears the signature of Tell & Lincoln, solicitors for the complainant. Mr. Lincoln's client was the founder of the religious denomination called "The Disciples of Christ," more commonly known as "Campbellites." The suit was brought by Mr. Campbell to quiet the title to a tract of land which he had purchased as an investment in McLean County in 1845.

Source
+ date
no. 111111



ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, 1788-1866

A reproduction of an original photograph in the library of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, Tennessee. The photograph is from a negative in Mathew Brady's National Portrait Gallery and was presented to the Society by Miss Evelyn H. Spence, Ashland, Virginia and Mrs. William B. Ardery, Paris, Kentucky.



Campbell-Owen Debates

Announcement, Aug 6 .1825

Owen letter to Campbell May 14. 1826

New Harmony Gazette

Annals, Philosophic Society.



Lincoln A Christian

Though Not A "Campbellite"

By E. F. RUDEEN



Abraham Lincoln

—The grandest character in word and work and the gentlest memory (excepting the Savior) of all our world.

—*N. Y. Christian Advocate*

—The one supreme human being since the man of Calvary

—*President Harding*

Can we do the Christian thing when he labors for the Church
 "The Church" in connection with the creed, we believe that
 immersion is "for salvation". The proper name for that Church
 is "The Christian Church", for that name applies to
 all those who are in Christ, whether identified with any religious
 organization.

The Campbellite Church does not show the Christian spirit in refus-
 ing membership to those Christians who believe that John baptized
 WITH water; yet we read in Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John
 1:26; John 1:31; Acts 1:5, and Acts 11:16, that John baptized with water.
 You cannot harmonize that with immersion.

The Greek word from which the word baptize was taken, (according
 to the Encyclopedia Britannica) means "To wash" or "to dip."

The Bible speaks of sprinkling water on a person to typify washing
 or cleansing from sin. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you,
 and ye shall be clean", Ezekiel 36:25.

Buried with Christ in baptism refers to Christ's baptism with the
 Holy Spirit. Christ's baptism and the New birth mean the same thing,
 for when we are Born again we are (in a spiritual sense) crucified,
 dead, buried and raised again to newness of life.

He that believeth and is baptised (Born again) shall be saved.

To be baptized with fire and the Holy Spirit, does not refer to two
 different baptisms, one material and the other spiritual; both refer to
 the spirit. Neither does "born of water and of the spirit" refer to two
 different baptisms; both refer to the New birth.

Jesus' command to baptize, in Matt. 28:19, does not refer to John's
 baptism, but to Christ's baptism with the Spirit. One hundred and
 twenty were so baptized on the day of Pentecost. We read in Acts
 8:17, Acts 11:16 and Acts 19:16 that the disciples baptized with the Holy
 Spirit.

Of Lincoln, "The New York Christian Advocate" (Methodist) wrote:
 "Abraham Lincoln, the grandest character in word and work and the
 gentlest memory (excepting the Saviour) of all our world". He was
 brought up among the hard-shelled Baptists so was thoroughly familiar
 with their arguments on immersion essential to salvation. He was a
 careful student of the Bible, an ideal Christian, with a determination to
 obey God, regardless of cost; in the face of all this, Lincoln was never
 immersed. He held to the Quaker belief: that John's baptism was only
 intended to teach the lesson of the one great baptism, that is of the
 Spirit, and that the practice of the former should be discouraged, even
 as did St. Paul, for he says in 1 Cor. 1:17, "Christ sent me not to bap-
 tize, but to preach."

"Jesus went up out of the water," does not mean that He was envel-
 oped in the water any more than that He was enveloped in the mountain,
 when "He went up INTO the mountain." The early Church fathers chis-
 eled on the walls of the catacombs their method of baptism, which was
 by sprinkling.

A lady was induced by the Campbellites to be immersed in the river
 in the dead of winter; the ice had to be cut in order to get her com-
 pletely under the water. On the way home, her clothes froze to her
 body, and she was in a natural result.

Instituted Baptism WITH Water. Instituted Baptism IN Water?

Campbell used the use of instrumental music in his churches.
 To apply the Christian Church would reject one of its
 greatest powers. Jesus told us to rejoice and be exceedingly

March 12 1942

As I Think On These Things

Frederick D. Kershner

Lincoln's Religious Status

SINCE the publication of our article "Was Lincoln Immersed" we have had numerous communications dealing with one aspect of the question or another. It is quite impossible to publish all of these statements, interesting as they are. We are condensing them to the best of our ability with sincere regrets to all those whose names may not appear in our digest.

First of all, we start with a statement from one who claims first-hand acquaintance with a witness of Lincoln's immersion. The information is from Frank A. Woten, minister, at Lakeport, California.

I wish to say that in 1928 in Santa Cruz, California, I announced in the daily paper of that city that I would speak the next Sunday on, "Abe Lincoln—the Great Christian," and a lady seeing the announcement called me up and asked to have me call. I did so and found a dear old lady who if still living would be over the century mark who told me she saw Abe Lincoln immersed with her own eyes. . . . I made inquiry of her neighbors and friends as to the trustworthiness of the woman's testimony and they all agreed her integrity was above reproach. Sorry I have forgotten her name.

We are trying to secure further information concerning this very interesting witness to Lincoln's baptism.

C. C. Ware, corresponding secretary of the North Carolina Christian Missionary Convention, writes:

I was very much interested in your statement in last week's *Christian-Evangelist* about Abraham Lincoln having been baptized by our brother, John O'Kane. I would very much like to see this statement elaborated in an article in your *Shane Quarterly*, if you have further information on that. It seems that none of Lincoln's biographers say anything about this and as you know there has been a tremendous volume of writing on Lincoln. I wonder if Edgar DeWitt Jones has any information on this, other than what you have given. I would like to see the incident fully documented.

A forthcoming issue of *Shane* will carry an article on this subject. Some years ago we asked Dr. Jones about the Black story, but he had never heard of it, and expressed his opinion that none of Lincoln's biographers had thus far gotten hold of it. He was disposed at that time to regard the incident as purely legendary.

Russell M. Bythewood, of Tabernacle Christian Church, Lincoln, Nebraska, writes us as follows:

I enclose a page from the *Evening State Journal*, Lincoln, dated February 12th, which gives information that President Lincoln was "life director of the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal church." It does not necessarily follow that he was a member of the Methodist Church, but this may be assumed.

I am not writing this in any sense of controversy, and certainly I have no information about the former president's church relationship. I am only writing to call your attention to the fact that at least two churches are claiming the President to have been a member of their communions. I thought you might be interested in the Lincoln newspaper clipping.

Mr. Bythewood encloses a clipping from the Lincoln, Neb. *Evening State Journal*, for February 12, 1942, with the headline, "Offers document to prove that Lincoln joined religious group." Also George P. Rutledge, of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, sends us substantially the same story (obviously an Associated Press write-up for Lincoln's birthday) clipped from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* for February 12th.

The gist of the write-up which comes from J. R. Anderson, Lexington, Kentucky, is to the effect that William H. Townsend, while rummaging in an attic in Springfield, Ohio, in the home of a union soldier, ran across a certificate (photographed in the article) to the effect that Abraham Lincoln was made a life director of the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society of the Foundry Church of Washington, D. C. The certificate is not dated, nor does it state that Mr. Lincoln was a member of the church but does acknowledge the receipt of \$150 from the chief executive as a contribution to the work of the society. The *Globe-Democrat* headlines the story "Claims Lincoln Joined Church," although there is not a word in the write-up itself to the effect that Lincoln did anything more than contribute \$150 to an organization which probably had a good financial solicitor.

If everyone who reads these lines could be scheduled as a member of all the churches to whose organizations he has contributed money, we would have an amazing situation. Some of us on this basis would be Quakers, Methodists, Presbyterians, or even Roman Catholics, or Jews. If the President of the United States joined the Methodist Church in 1863, there ought to be some record of it far more convincing than a receipt for a contribution of \$150 to a missionary society dug up in an old attic many years after Lincoln's death.

Of course, the headliner, as usual, failed to read the article with which he was dealing.

Harry K. Shaw of Medina, Ohio, writes to say he has John O'Kane's Bible with the inscription on the fly-leaf "John O'Kane, \$1.25. Big meeting, 1st Lord's Day in August, Connersville, Scott, Tinerson, Mitchell attendants."

It's an 1834 Latin Vulgate translation. It seems I read somewhere that our early preachers were fond of quoting this translation against the Catholics. They kept it handy for this purpose.

This does not have to do directly with John O'Kane's immersing Lincoln, but it is interesting as showing the catholicity of our pioneer preachers in the use of biblical translations. It is rather a far cry from the Douay text of John O'Kane to the *Living Oracles* of Alexander Campbell, but both men preached the same gospel. O'Kane practically founded Butler University and on more than one occasion crossed swords with the Sage of Bethany.



As Seen from the Dome

Robert T. Allan

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 5.—Whether you are reading this column “deep in the heart of Texas” or in a Chicago apartment house, and your loved ones are defense workers or service men stationed in or near Washington, you can rest assured that churches here are going all-out in a morale-building program for them. And all without any fuss or feathers or frills, or hiring any \$4,600-a-year dancing teachers.

Freshest developments in the church-sponsored activities are the decision of five leading churches to hold open house every evening for the defense workers and service men; and the holding of midweek programs to augment the week-end tours, dinners, and other programs.

While several other churches may fall in line with the daily open house plan, the present ones are St. Thomas' Episcopal, where President Roosevelt frequently worships; Foundry Methodist, Calvary and First Baptist, and All Souls' Unitarian.

Also, we learned only yesterday that several downtown churches may be designated as reception centers, to aid defense workers in getting located when they arrive at Union Station. The centers would be conducted with the aid of the Government. However, we have not been able to confirm this news as yet.

According to Grover L. Hartman, director of the Washington Federation of Churches' Defense Commission, service men and defense workers are finding in the church-sponsored programs a sure tonic for homesickness blues.

As one Fort Belvoir lad phrased it after a local church youth group had concluded a worship service entertainment program there: “This is the first time in the eighteen days I've been in camp that I haven't been so homesick I couldn't go to sleep or do much else I'd like to do.”

Not a week passes that some church group doesn't pay a visit to one of the near-by camps, where they aid the chaplains in devotional programs, and promote recreational and social activities.

That the “boys” really appreciate the churches' thoughtfulness is shown by the way they pass the good word along. The Defense Commission's office is swamped daily with inquiries about service men's programs from some lad who heard about it from a “buddy” in camp.

The defense workers are informed about the church-

sponsored activities for them through bulletins posted in government buildings, announcements in the public press, and much word-of-mouth across-desk publicity in federal offices. Pastors are urging congregations to cooperate in the work, and are pitching in themselves to make the programs successful.

There's a kindly featured woman at the Federation Building who never gets too tired to answer inquiries from the lads in the service. She's Mrs. Minnie Drexilius, house matron, who keeps a phone at her bedside, just in case one of the lads calls in the wee small hours. “We can't do too much for them,” she said to me the other day.

NEWEST phase of the services of the Christian Church Council here is aiding transferred federal workers who are Disciples of Christ get relocated in Richmond, Chicago, St. Louis, and other cities.

According to J. Lloyd Black, energetic Council director, he secures the names of Disciples who are being transferred, passes them on to Christian ministers in various cities for follow-up.

Government transfers, by the way, are certainly causing reshuffling of official positions in Washington churches, many of which are temporarily losing their “pillars.” Most of the churches, however, are taking the situation in its stride, and making the necessary adjustments to keep the programs rolling smoothly.

The Council, among other things, aids in clearing Disciples of Christ-sponsored programs for service men and defense workers with the Defense Commission of the Federation of Churches. The Council maintains a rooming service, through which newcomers of the brotherhood are secured living quarters in homes of Disciple families here, and encouraged to attend Disciple churches of this area.

WASHINGTON'S ministers are all set to give both spiritual and practical service in event of air-raids or other war emergencies.

Now available at the Federation Building are arm bands, passes, car stickers, and other equipment, being distributed through the cooperation of the Civilian Defense officials and the Federation. Instructors' first-aid courses for clergymen are being given at the Federation Building by a Red Cross instructor. The ministers will pass on their first-aid knowledge to their congregations.

HARDING COLLEGE

SEARCY, ARKANSAS

May 16, 1951

Department of Speech

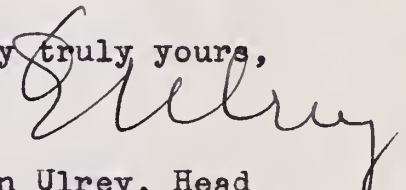
Mr. Lewis Warren
Lincoln Life Insurance Co.
Springfield, Illinois

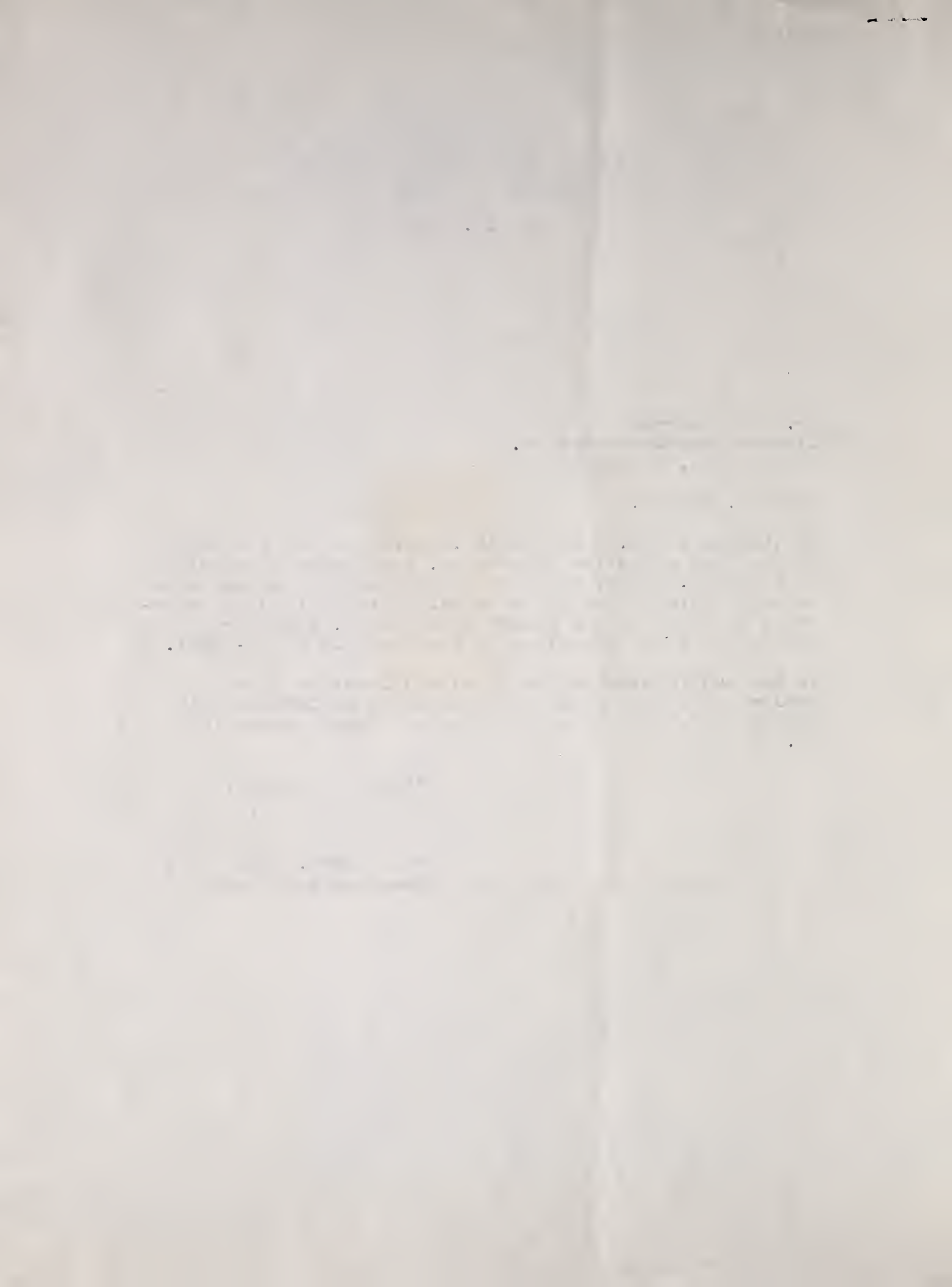
Dear Mr. Warren:

In talking to Mr. Enos Dowling, librarian for the School of Religion of Butler University, about source materials on Barton W. Stone; he told me that perhaps you had some valuable information of the possibility of finding references to Stone in the papers of Illinois, published during the time he resided at Jacksonville (1832-1844).

If you can furnish me the names and location of any newspapers of the period that might be of interest, it will be very kind of you and I shall deeply appreciate it.

Very truly yours,


Evan Ulrey, Head
Department of Speech



May 22, 1951

Mr. Evan Ulrey
Department of Speech
Harding College
Searcy, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Ulrey:

I fear I am not going to be of much assistance to you directly in your quest for material on Barton W. Stone. I do have one of the quotations I use from him and have a few citations which I have picked up here and there.

If you have not already contacted the Jacksonville, Illinois Historical Society which is quite an active institution I think you would do well to do so and they have a lot of material on Barton W. Stone and could, I am sure, give you the names of the newspapers which would be most helpful.

Also the Illinois State Historical Society at Springfield would, I think, be able to cite you to some valuable material on Barton W. Stone. We will be pleased to learn of your progress in gathering Stone's material.

Very truly yours,

LAW:JM
L.A. Warren

Director

THE
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE
NAVY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
SUBJECT: [illegible]

[illegible text]

[illegible text]

[illegible text]

[illegible text]

[illegible text]

University Church
Disciples of Christ[®]
Chicago





THE simple plan of the church is suggested by the old Moot halls of England rather than by any recognized ecclesiastical form. Simply a rectangular room, with a raised platform at the south end for the pulpit; and a great window; there is no transept or chancel effect, no chancel arch.

On the east, separated from the auditorium by tall columns and arches, is a long gallery and at its end a fireplace, visible from every part of the chapel. This is a meeting place for the congregation and, filled with chairs, adds materially to the seating capacity.

The choir and organ are in the balcony over the minister's room. On the west side three large bays, with mullioned windows, add to the welcome of the fireplace.

Technically the building is in perpendicular Gothic, of warm cream, gray, and yellow limestone with Bedford stone trim.

The timbered ceiling has some color on the beams and the oblique walls of the bays offer an opportunity for mural painting and rich color.

HOWARD VAN DOREN SHAW
HENRY K. HOLSMAN

Architects

Far off the noises of the world
retreat;
The loud vociferations of the
street
Become an indistinguishable
roar.
So, as I enter here from day to
day,
And leave my burden at this
minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not
ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time dis-
consolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies
away,
While the eternal ages watch
and wait.

—LONGFELLOW

























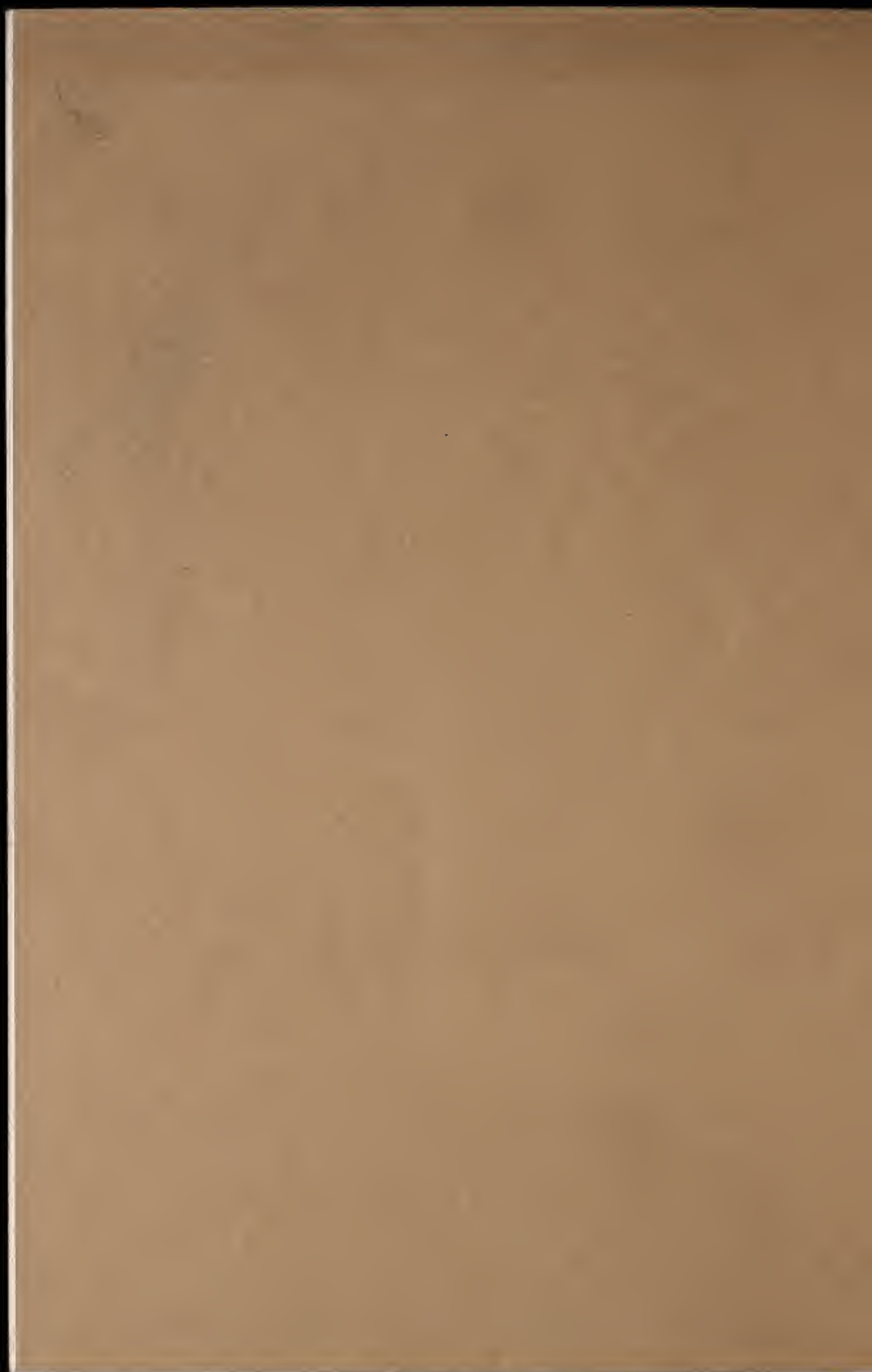












**CHARLES ELKIN AR-
RESTED ON OLD CHARGE**

Charles Elkin who has spent three months in jail at Elizabethtown, was brought here on an old indictment of 1915, charging him with disturbing religious worship at Benningfield's chapel near Mt. Sherman.

Bond was made and he was released from jail here.

DISCIPLES

DRAWER 4A

RELIGIOUS CONTACTS

